

Regional Cleavage Influence
towards Island Electoral Behavior:
Evidences from the Canaries

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**REGIONAL CLEAVAGE INFLUENCE TOWARDS ISLAND
ELECTORAL BEHAVIOUR: EVIDENCES FROM THE CANARIES***

JORGE TUÑÓN**

Abstract: The Canary Islands are a region with legislative capacities within the European Union (EU). It has had always serious socio-economic deficits. Its distance to its political and geographical centers, its fragmentation and the weakness of its geographical neighbours highly remarked its Centre-Periphery cleavage towards both, Madrid and Brussels.

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Regarding to the regional/national cleavage (at political level mainly represented by the non-State wide parties), the Canary political framework has been large and varied. Therefore, Canary politics presents so often insular parties, local ones, several large electoral coalitions and independent candidatures. Among this political parties diversity, the Coalición Canaria (CC) birth (1993) and immediate electoral success and regional government performance (until nowadays), represents the main issue of the contemporary Canary nationalism (Tuñón, 2008b). The specific Archipelago electoral regulations and the lack of regional political arch fragmentation (only the left and the right-wing national parties, PSOE and PP, get significant records within the Archipelago) promoted the CC regional government leading majorities' continuity during the last fifteen years.

However, the regional coalition electoral decline has been progressive since it got its top ballot boxes records in 1999 and 2000. How does then the regional/national cleavage influence the Islands voters? Has its importance decreased over the years? Does the centre-periphery issue variable influence equally Canary voter's choices within Local, Regional, National and European elections? How would it then be possible to measure the Regional cleavage influence towards electoral behaviour in the Canary Islands?

The proposed exploratory research will be carried out through findings, mainly due to the available Islands electoral records and its qualitative analysis method interpretation. Thus, the text will seek to analytically answer every above single proposed question about how the Ultra-Peripheral (Regional) cleavage influences both, the political parties' framework and the electoral behaviour in the Canary Islands.

Keywords: Canary Islands, Regional cleavage, electoral behaviour, dual voting

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1. Introduction

The Canary Islands are an ultra-peripheral European region highly determined by its fragmentation and geographical location in the Atlantic Ocean. It is 1.000 km far away from the Spanish continental coasts, 4.000 km from America, but only 100 from the African coasts. Its seven major islands (Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Tenerife, La Gomera, La Palma and El Hierro) and its almost two million citizens enjoy a strategic location in between the three continents.

Economically, the Canaries have been traditionally a commercial and agricultural region. However, their industrial development has been very weak due to the lack of commodities and the *hecho insular* (Island fact) that increases the transportation prizes. But since the 60s onwards, their major economical resource comes from the massive tourism. It hosts nowadays more than 12 million visitors every single year¹.

From a constitutional and political perspective, the Canary Islands are a Spanish *Comunidad Autónoma* (Autonomous Community), but a region with legislative capacities within the European Union (EU), as well. It has had always serious socio-economic deficits. Its distance to Madrid and Brussels, its fragmentation and the weakness of its geographical neighbours made much complicated its growth. However, it made the most since the Spanish adhesion to the European Union in 1986, and its full integration within it, five years later. The Canaries were soon much benefited due to the New European Regional Policy designed during the 80s, and specially afterwards the Ultra-peripheral legal recognition within the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997). Nowadays, the Canaries are close to reach EU average figures (92% of the EU Gross Domestic Product)².

Canary specificities are also reproduced at both, party system and electoral behaviour levels. Indeed, Canary Islands ballot boxes records exhibit a very heterogeneous or multiple voters behaviour. In fact, the Island's electorate distinguishes different factors and variables within each electoral context, adapting its preferences depending on the election level (BRAVO DE LAGUNA, 1998, p.120-121). This characteristic mainly determines regional and insular political parties

¹ This has been a remarked low quality profile tourism which has already produced several environmental damages.

² See further explanations in TUÑÓN, 2009a, pp 89-92; and SÁNCHEZ, 2004, pp. 141-143.

excisions and coalitions, but also their realignments within the own regional government.

Indeed, just before the Spanish national elections in 1993, (a coalition formed by most of the Canary insular political parties) was born. The Canary parties ambitions, but also the deep confrontation between the Canary formations of the two largest Spanish political parties (Partido Socialista Obrero Español – PSOE- and Partido Popular –PP-), let Coalición Canaria (CC) to reach the regional government that year. That confrontation, but also to the little fragmentation of the parliamentary regional arch, promoted CC leadership within every single Canary Government until today.

Dealing with the regional cleavage and the Non-State wide parties, the Canary political framework has been large and varied. Therefore, Canary politics present so often insular parties, local ones, several large electoral coalitions and independent candidatures. Among this political parties diversity, two of them could historically be named due to its importance within the local and the insular politics: Asamblea Majorera (AM)³, and the Agrupaciones Independientes de Canarias (AIC). The Canary right wing reconstruction (due to the Unión de Centro Democrático failure in 1982) was very complex. It even led to new parties and coalitions appearances, but also to excisions and political disappearances. The end of the process allowed the CC formation in 1993. The initial counter-parts which became part of the Coalition were: AIC, AM, Centro Canario Independiente (CCI), Centro Canario Nacionalista (CCN), Iniciativa Canaria (ICAN), and the Partido Nacionalista Canario (PNC). These formations led during March 1993 the successful regional government *moción de censura* (censure motion), which turned Manuel Hermoso into the first nationalist regional president in the Archipelago. Then, the new CC coalition built its own group in the National Parliament after the 1993 State elections and held its first constitutive convention during November 1994 (SORIANO, 2003).

Despite of its original aims, CC has not been able to bring together every single local or insular political party in the Archipelago. Furthermore, in spite of its nationalist claims expressed within the first article of the Party Statutes (Coalición Canaria –Statutes-, 2005), it can not be considered as a nationalist political party at European level. Definitely, it has ideologically nothing to share with the Scottish National Party, the Vlaams Block, the Lega Nord, Esquerra Republicana de

³ Based in the island of Fuerteventura.

Catalunya or the Partido Nacionalista Vasco, among others. Therefore, CC created on the basis of the insular and regional electoral concurrence but with its space within the Spanish national party system, represents one of the best examples of Non-State wide parties (DE WINTER, 1994). Thus, to some extent, CC could represent the regional cleavage at parties' competition level within the Canaries, but it can not exhaust it. However, CC data will be very useful to point out some of the regional cleavage major characteristics within the Archipelago.

This paper will seek to explain how the specific regional cleavage determines Canarian voters attitudes. Therefore, we will methodologically apply LLERA, MONTERO and PALLARÉS (1998), and PALLARÉS and KEATING (2003) analysis about Non State wide-parties, multi-level electoral competition and party systems in Spain, to the specific Canary party system framework. Therefore, our analysis will go beyond the next key points: the development of the Centre-Periphery fracture within the Spanish model, the electoral performances in the Archipelago, or the attitudinal characterisation of the Canary electorate through the national/regional dimension, to name a few.

2. The development of the Centre-Periphery cleavage in Spain

The regional cleavage has been at the core of the Spanish politics since the strength of both the Basque and the Catalan nationalisms at the end of the nineteenth century (BALFOUR and QUIROGA, 2007). Despite of Franco regime centralist theories and its repression towards any peripheral nationalism, those feelings and identifications socially arose after the dictator death. Therefore, the transition to the modern state faced with rival nation-building projects in competition (KEATING and WILSON, 2009). However, democratic conservatives (People's Party, PP), more kind to limit regional autonomy; socialist (PSOE) and former communists (IU) from much federals approaches; and both Basque and Catalans democratic nationalists (mainly PNV and CIU), reached the agreement to develop the so-called Estado de las Autonomías ("State of Autonomies").

Indeed, this multi-level political system articulates optional provisions for autonomy through two specified tracks. On the one hand, the fast track (article 151 of the Spanish Constitution) was used initially by the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia, and afterwards by Andalusia. On the other hand, the slow track was used by twelve Autonomous Communities. Moreover, Navarre was simply allowed to democratise and update its ancient foral institutions and privileges. Finally, autonomist demands were taken up throughout the country resulting

seventeen Autonomous Communities. However, they conformed Spain as an unity clearly identifiable like an historical unity, although all its internal past and present confrontations (MORENO, 1997, p.85).

During the last three decades of democracy, nationalists (not only from Catalonia or the Basque Country) have interpreted the Constitution as the initial portray to accommodate and enlarge their continuous demands. On the contrary, centralists state-wide parties have looked for to extend the exceptional (article 151) powers to every Autonomous Community. This has been contested by the non-state wide parties, demanding new extra-powers to justify their distinctiveness. Therefore, the “ethno-territorial” concurrence (MORENO, 1997) looking for the further recognition of their *hechos diferenciales* (“differential facts”), has been until nowadays the main characteristic of the *Estado de las Autonomías*. Indeed, this is an on-going competition since the re-opening of the Autonomy question through the New Statutes issue has not still finished.

In fact, some of the Autonomous Communities have aimed to traduce their different origins or traditions into political power quotas, establishing an asymmetric and debated *Estado de la Autonomías* (Moreno, 1997). However, the distinctiveness’ application to the Canary Islands case is much obvious. Indeed, the *hecho diferencial* notion is a logic consequence due to the direct attributions conferred by both, the Spanish Constitution and the Treaty of the European Union (CARBALLO 2001, and TUÑÓN 2009a).

In fact, the Canaries got their Autonomous Statute only four years later in 1982. Despite of the regional interest, the Canaries were not allowed to follow the fast process through the 151 article of the Spanish Constitution. Although it followed the usual 143 article process, it gained special competences in Education and Health similar to those ones booked for 151 Autonomous Communities (Basque Country, Catalonia, Galicia and finally Andalusia)⁴.

However, the Canaries definition as nationality has not been added within the Regional Statute until its 1996 reform. Its inclusion clarified the first Statute redaction ambiguity which did not mention the Canaries as a region or as a nationality⁵. Far away the Statutory or Constitutional recognition about the Canary nationality, a question may be solved dealing with the regional identity and the dichotomy due to the insularism and the own nationality (BRAVO DE LAGUNA,

⁴ Follow thorough explanations in TUÑÓN, 2009a, pp.84-85.

⁵ Follow thorough explanations in PERAZA, 1999.

1999). Nowadays, there are important cleavages or social and political fractures due to the insular issue. As stated in the article 57 of the Canary Statute, the effective inter-insular solidarity is needed. Thus, apart from its consideration as a region, autonomous community or nation, the Canaries should be understood like an unity, but not as the mere islands addition.

However, Canary nationalism has traditionally been characterised by its political weakness and fragmentation, nevertheless the presence of objective and subjective factors like the cultural or the territory self-identification ones. Dealing with regional or Non-State wide parties, the Canaries offers several kinds of them. Being distanced from the continental Spain, but fragmented too, allowed many insular, provincial and regional political parties flourishing. However, their different ideologies but also island origin had always made impossible to join all of them into a comprehensive Non-State Canary wide party. Indeed, the different types of regionalist parties which attempted to mobilise the territorial cleavage in the Canaries, historically showed high discontinuity in party organisations and fragmentation due to the insular origin but also to the left-right ideological scale.

But, there are also other reasons to explain the so-called “deficit” about Canary regionalist/nationalist political parties scholar writing. First of all, the lack of support and interaction between the intellectual and scientific regional elites with the small, fragmented and mainly focused in the local and insular convulse politics, nationalist/regionalist Canary political parties. Furthermore, the second explanation links with the Canary public opinion moderate selfidentity feelings.

As the Canary sociologist González de la Fé states, the Archipelago population feels itself Canary through its own island. This is promoted by the lack of an enough consolidated experience of regional government. She thinks the Canary identity can not be the quotas sharing result and the resources obtaining from both Brussels and Madrid. Therefore, it is not possible to make up a Canary identity faced to the Spanish one⁶. However, the nationalist component is conformed in the Canaries by two sectors: the traditional (a minority without relevant political action) on the one hand, and the political, on the other hand.

Among the traditional, two of them could be underlined. The indigenous independentism led historically by Antonio Cubillo, that looked for the “Guanche Nation” foundation, and whose vindications have not current political representation. And the South American Nationalism, represented by the Partido

⁶ Teresa González de la Fé, Canary sociologist, through TUÑÓN 2009a, pp.92-93.

Nacionalista Canario and the Frente Secundino Delgado (currently within Coalición Canaria), with South American tradition and much linked to Venezuela. It only reaches a relative importance in the Western Islands of La Palma and Tenerife.

Among those with current political activity at Autonomous Community level. It could be referred Coalición Canaria (CC), and to a lesser extend Nueva Canarias (NC):

- Coalición Canaria was formed as an electoral coalition some months before the 1993 National Electoral Process with the aim of gaining a Parliamentary Group in both, the Spanish Congress and the Spanish Senate. Its counter-parts were former independent Canary political parties at insular, provincial or regional level. They were: Agrupaciones Independientes Canarias (AIC); Centro Canario Nacionalista (CCN), later Centro Canario Independiente (CCI); Iniciativa Canaria (ICAN); Asamblea Majorera (AM); and the small Partido Nacionalista Canario (PNC). Those political formations were very heterogeneous from their programmatic and ideological perspective, but also due to their territorial implantation and their internal organisation. A couple of months before the National Elections the coalition reached the Canary Government after a “censure motion” which knocked down the former socialist-AIC coalition government. CC also consolidated its objectives in that year June national elections with four and five seats in the Senate and the Congress, respectively (BRAVO DE LAGUNA, 1999, pp. 132-133).

It is not possible to deny the CC applied and juncture birth. However, it kept with large or minor majorities within the regional government until today. This is a relevant issue within the convulse regional politics, but even more taking into account that: the power-sharing among its members, the lack of a real leadership within the coalition, and its members ideological and organizational differences; have led to internal tensions which so often affected the regional government composition and the parliamentary coalitions.

Anyway, CC nationalist/regionalist speech promotes a better efficiency in the interaction within the State wide parties, but also the defence of the regional singularities within the Spanish State but also among the European institutions. Thus, the CC “nationalism” has a European façade and remarks the different elements of the Archipelago identity due to the Ultra-peripheral recognition, but also the sub-State ancient special rights defence (economic, fiscal and commercial) within the Canary European integration. Furthermore, it introduces the Canaries

as the commercial, economic and cultural crossroad between three continents: America, Africa and Europe. To sum up, the “CC nationalism” is mainly light and pragmatic. It is much more a demanding regionalism which looks for to reach the Spanish and the European welfare standards, due to the recognition and exploitation of its Ultra-peripheral specificities (TUÑÓN, 2009a, pp.92-93).

- Nueva Canarias is a much newer (November 2005) CC excision. It is mainly a left-wing and Gran Canaria excision, due to the accused tendencies to settle down different government level agreements much easily with the National Conservatives than with the National Socialists, but also to the progressive right-wing and Tenerife factions’ preponderance within the Coalition.

Apart from these political vicissitudes, (culturally) there are obvious tradition, folklore, cooking, or religious celebration coincidences. It is a very remarkable fact due to the weakness of

the associative network in the Archipelago. However, a real Canary cultural policy has never been designed. Moreover, it is also impossible to talk about an own language. Despite of the fables about the primitive population Guanche language, there are only some common idioms mainly from Portuguese and Berber precedence.

3. The regional cleavage at party level: the non-State wide parties in Spain

Regionalist parties are extended and scholarly analysed phenomenon in Europe since the last decades of the XXth century. At the very beginning, the also so-called non-State wide parties were associated with the phenomenon of “stateless” nationalism due to their original strict approaches towards the politically and culturally homogenous nation. Then LIPSET (1981) or HOBBSBAWN (1990) argued that this parties represented ancient, non-modern and closed visions of society. However, some kind of scholar recognition has been afterwards attributed to them. Indeed, KEATING (2001), GUIBERNAU (2002), DE WINTER, GÓMEZ-REINO and LYNCH (2006), or HEPBURN (2008) have maintained that the regionalist parties have muted progressively looking for some “new forms of collective organisation amid the rescaling of political authority brought about by supranational integration” (HEPBURN, 2009, p.516). In fact, European non-State wide parties have re-interpreted self-determination to mean different degrees of autonomy, the European one included. Indeed, they have found out an increasing

number of opportunities for networking, lobbying, participation within inter-regional transnational associations or political engagements, at European scale.

In Spain, the Estado de las Autonomías has directly promoted the territorialisation of the National party system. Particularly, it has fostered regional identities, but also helped to build the idea of the regional interest faced to the national one. As it will be much contrasted within the Canary case, autonomous and local elections in Spain have traditionally “encouraged the emergence of local and regional parties, which have then projected themselves into national politics” (PALLARÉS and KEATING 2003, p.241). Despite of the important role the regionalist parties also played towards the integration of the Autonomous Communities into national politics; it is also well-known that they have further strengthened the territorial fragmentation of party system and political representation.

Among the Spanish political researchers is much extended the expression *Partidos de ámbito no estatal* (PANE), in order to refer to the DE WINTER (1994) concept of Non-State wide parties. The PANE usage has been promoted by the concept comprehension of very different realities (MOLAS, 1977). Indeed, it comprehends the traditional expressions about the centreperiphery cleavage, but the territorial issue within the parties debate, too (LLERA, MONTERO and PALLARÉS. 1998).

In this context, several regionalist or non-State wide parties have participated in local, regional, national and European elections in Spain. And this high number is one of the main specificities traditionally exhibited by the Spanish party system. Furthermore, their electoral implantation level, their participation at regional government level or the role also played at national level, are also some of their main distinctive characteristics. Focusing in the territorial arena issue, these parties present their distinctiveness and independence from State wide parties as the best guarantee of the defence of the interest of the Autonomous Communities (PALLARÉS and KEATING, 2003; or LLERA, MONTERO and PALLARÉS, 1998).

It could be initially thought that non-State wide parties would be limited to the Basque Country and Catalonia, and to a lesser extend to Galicia. In fact, some of the main decisive regionalist parties, at regional but also national level come from these territories. Indeed, the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV) or Convergencia i Unió (CIU), share large experiences of regional government at their Autonomous Communities, but they have also played a key role to support minority national governments during the nineties decade. In addition, Eusko

Alkartasuna (EA), the successive denominations of the nowadays illegal Batasuna, Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), or the Bloque Nacionalista Gallego (BNG), have also enjoyed important government power quotas at regional and local level.

However, non-State wide parties have not only been a phenomenon only well developed within nation conscious regions. In fact, regionalist parties have also been well widespread among the Spanish territory. Thus, it has been possible to find out non-State wide parties within Autonomous Communities as Comunidad Valenciana (Unió Valenciana), Balears (Unió Mallorquina), Aragón (Partido Aragonés o Chunta Aragonesista), or Andalucía (Partido Andalucista), among others. And the Canary Islands do not constitute an exception. Indeed, one of the most successful examples of strong regionalist parties outside the so-called historic nationalities has been Coalición Canaria (CC), which has established a dominant axial position at regional level.

4. Political and Electoral competition within the Canary Islands

Political competition in the Canary Islands has been traditionally characterized by its main geographic factor, the insularity. Ballot boxes track records can not be explained without attending to the insularity variable or the so-called double insularity, in the case of the less populated minor islands of Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, La Palma, La Gomera and El Hierro. Thus, the regional cleavage mainly, helped to a lesser extend by the urban-rural and the traditional right-left one, have determined most of the political parties and coalitions electoral achievements in the Archipelago (SORIANO, 2003).

Although it is not always easy to resume the electoral and political competition main trends in the Islands (due to the high number and kind of both, electoral contests and political parties and coalitions), we will point out some of the main specific characters revealed by the Canary party system during the last three decades.

The Canary ballot boxes track records contrast the regional multiple electoral behaviour hypothesis. Indeed, the Islands electorate distinguishes different circumstances for each electoral process, adapting its preferences to the different election level. Therefore, a dual but also a triple vote system has been settled down depending on the electoral process type: local, regional, national or European (BRAVO DE LAGUNA, 1998). Islands voters preferences have not only

to be adapted to the election level, but to both, the traditional left-right and to the centre-periphery or regional-national cleavages, too. Indeed, the preponderance of the regional-national cleavage has been clearly exhibited within the second and third level elections. In fact, the existence of Canary non- State wide parties (formally or informally) attached to different territorial levels: regional, provincial and insular, configures one of the main specificities of the Canary parties sub-system.

At the beginning, the already mentioned continuous transformation of the political parties and coalitions, mainly at local and regional level, and the right ideological political representation re-build after the Unión de Centro Democrático (UCD) disappearance, led to a multi-polar and sometimes chaotic political framework in the Archipelago. However, the 1987 regional elections marked the inflexion point to consolidate a much less volatile electoral framework, but also the realignment of the political forces and coalitions. Despite of a bi-polarisation (socialist and regionalists) could be then appreciated, the nineties decade finally established a clearly tri-axial Canary political framework, that has also included the national conservatives until nowadays.

As already stated, even before the official Coalición Canaria (CC) formation, its counterparts reached the regional government afterwards the “censure motion” which knocked down the socialist Canary government (1991-1993) led by the former president, the socialist Jerónimo Saavedra. Then, Manuel Hermoso became the first “nationalist” regional President. He led a minority Canary Government.

After the 1995 elections, CC and the Peoples Party (PP) agreed a coalition government led again by Manuel Hermoso. CC led the government with the PP parliamentary support, until 1996 when (due to national politics exchanges) the PP also got some “non sensitive” regional ministries.

After the 1999 autonomous elections, both CC and PP reedited their regional government agreement, whose president would be, Román Rodríguez. Some coalition disagreements forced the PP regional ministers government leave, but CC still got the conservative parliamentary support until the end of the legislature in 2003.

The 2003 autonomous elections results promoted a CC-PP coalition government reissue, led by a new CC president, Adán Martín. Once again, Canary politics dynamited the government coalition during November 2005. Then, the PP regional ministers left the regional government, and the conservative

parliamentary regional government support also disappeared. Therefore, CC led a minority government until the end of the legislature.

The last 2007 autonomous elections socialist large victory promoted again the CC-PP coalition government reissue. Since then, a bicolour regional executive led by the CC leader Paulino Rivero governs the Archipelago⁷.

The regional parliament rule system (which requires a double majority to be eligible: 6% of the regional vote and 30% of the insular vote) and the insular fields upgraded importance have always made impossible the “one-colour” absolute majority Canary governments. Therefore, different party coalitions led the successive regional government since 1985, and particularly since 1993. Despite of this fact, those agreements failed so often and different government options happened within the Canary governments: bicolour CC-PP governments, “mono-colour” CC governments with the PP parliamentary support, and minority “mono-colour” CC governments without parliamentary external support.

Some details should be underlined about all these facts. Since the PSOE-AIC government failure in 1993, a PSOE-CC coalition agreement has never been possible again. CC exhibited therefore a major ideological attitude to colligate with the PP than with the PSOE. PSOE and PP Canary factions never agreed together at regional level, mainly due to national politics instructions⁸.

Despite of the facility for both CC and PP to reach regional government agreements, three CC minority government experiences happened since 1993: (1993-1996), (2001-2003) and (2005-2007). Last two ones, due to CC-PP government disagreements, forced the PP regional ministers Government leave. Therefore, despite the ideological profile of the regional government coalitions since 1993, those have not been pacific at all. Indeed, CC managed properly to become the axe of any regional government in the Archipelago, but it was not as successful to assure a consistent government project.

⁷ Follow further explanations in TUÑÓN, 2009a, pp. 94-95; ACOSTA, 2005, pp. 231-243; GARCÍA ROJAS, 2003, pp. 137-156.

⁸ PP and PSOE coalition at sub-State level has only been possible last April 2009, within the special Basque context. Then, the conservative support to the second largest party in the March Regional elections, made possible the first non nationalist Basque Autonomous Community President, the socialist Patxi López.

5. Electoral performance in the Canary Islands

This section outlines the most representative parties within the Archipelago ballot boxes records and their landmarks in achieving representation at Local, Regional, State, and European level. As the main and more permanent representative of the regional cleavage, Coalición Canaria (CC) is a political party clearly marked by its electoral and regional government success, even before its constitutional foundation. Then, its founder members coalition had already reached the Canary executive, but also some seats in both the Senate and the National Parliament. Nowadays (fifteen years later), CC still runs the regional government and has a small representation within the National Parliament (two seats).

Diverse reasons explain the different CC electoral success since 1993. CC was very successful in attracting votes just after 1993. Then, the regional parties unification idea was its major success. Until then, the nationalist/regionalist political parties field was much fragmented due to the different (ideological, insular, provincial and regional) cleavages. An ambitious regional party strong enough to defend the Canary interests in Madrid had never been possible. Therefore, CC managed to successfully sell the regional joining idea, and got many Canary voters confidence. Secondly, another important issue has been the socio-economic sector support CC easily obtained. Particularly, within the European integration most of the regional socio-economic sector thought its interests and connexions would be better defended, both in Madrid and Brussels, joining/linking the new regional party. Indeed, the requirements, exceptional integration and special fiscal regime maintenance has been much positive for the regional economy. To sum up, the initial success of CC would be related to its ability to present itself as the Canary interest defender.

These section tables (5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4) show the main Canary political forces ballot boxes records obtained in the Local, Regional, National and European elections during the democratic period. Due to the Canary politic specificities, results are attached not to the single political parties, but to the groups or coalitions led by the referred main parties. Therefore, it has been also possible to show the CC coalition members result addition, even before the CC foundation in 1993.

Taking into account only the most important non-State wide party within the Archipelago results since 1993 in every single election in the Canaries, it is possible to state two different CC record achievements phases. It exhibited continuous ascendant vote records since 1993 until 2000. Indeed, the 1999 Local (34.6%), Regional (37.5%) and European (34.3%), and the 2000 National (29.8%)

electoral results marked CC top records. However, since CC reached its tops marks, the second descending phase until nowadays started (2001-2008)⁹.

Several factors would explain the CC electoral top records in 2000, its stagnation and the backward steps in the following electoral processes. First of all, the internal coalition crisis and the main Gran Canaria and Tenerife islands dissension. Secondly, the novelty an united CC (instead the previous “Taifas Kingdom”) represented in 1993, was not longer valid. Canarians would need since 2001 onwards something more than the mixed regionalist/nationalism discourse. Thirdly, CC had enjoyed a preferential treatment as a National Government ally during the 1996-2000 term. However, the best CC records in the National Parliament coincided in 2000 with the Peoples Party (PP) absolute majority. Thus, CC pressure strategy was no longer effective and its electoral records went down. Finally, the natural Government erosion through the years, but also some corruption scandals, have determined the CC ballot boxes records trend decline.

The below tables comparative analysis would reveal the existence of dual voting among the Canary electorate. CC enjoyed better results in Local and mainly Regional elections, while its records have always been much modest within the National or European processes. Therefore, it could be stated that the typical CC voter give priority to different cleavages depending the electoral process type. They seem to be more influenced about the regional and national cleavage in the Municipal and Autonomous elections; while they take more into account the ideological left-right cleavage in the national and European processes. 11

**Table 5.1 Electoral Results (in average %).
Local Elections in the Canary Islands (1979-2007).**

⁹ It may be underlined, that there were not electoral processes in the Archipelago in 2001 or 2002. Therefore, the first election results that reveals the new CC trend were held in 2003.

	1979	1983	1987	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007
CC	1.0	12.5	27.5	33.5	31.7	34.6	32.9	25.3
PSOE	17.6	33.9	27.8	32.2	25.3	26.3	28.4	30.8
PP	-	-	9.6	11.6	27.6	26.4	25.1	20.7
IUC	5.0	4.0	7.3	1.3	4.3	2.6	1.0	1.2
NC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.3
CCN	-	-	-	-	1.4	0.1	-	4.4

**Due to the Canary politic specificities, results are attached not to the single political parties, but to the groups or coalitions led by the referred main parties. Therefore, it has been also possible to show the CC party members result addition, even before the CC foundation in 1993. ** (CC) Coalición Canaria, (PSOE) Partido Socialista Obrero Español, (PP) Partido Popular, (IUC) Izquierda Unida por Canarias, (C) ueva Canarias, (CC) Centro Canario acionalista.*

Source: ISTAC (Canary Islands Statistics Institute)

**Table 5.2. Electoral Results (in average %).
Autonomous Elections in the Canary Islands (1983-2007).**

	1983	1987	1991	1995	1999	2003	2007
CC	1.0	28.1	36.1	33.2	37.5	33.3	24.5
PSOE	41.4	28.0	33.3	23.3	24.4	25.8	35.0
PP	-	11.3	12.9	31.4	27.6	31.0	24.4
IUC	-	6.1	-	5.2	2.8	1.3	0.7
NC	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.5
CCN	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.1

**Due to the Canary politic specificities, results are attached not to the single political parties, but to the groups or coalitions led by the referred main parties. Therefore, it has been also possible to show the CC party members result addition, even before the CC foundation in 1993. ** (CC) Coalición Canaria, (PSOE) Partido Socialista Obrero Español, (PP) Partido Popular, (IUC) Izquierda Unida por Canarias, (C) ueva Canarias, (CC) Centro Canario acionalista.*

Source: ISTAC (Canary Islands Statistics Institute)

**Table 5.3. Electoral Results (in average %).
National Elections in the Canary Islands (1977-2008).**

	1977	1979	1982	1986	1989	1993	1996	2000	2004	2008
CC				15.4	13.9	25.7	25.2	29.8	24.6	17.6
<i>PSOE</i>	17.5	17.9	36.8	36.0	36.3	30.0	30.1	22.4	34.8	39.9
<i>PP</i>	8.0	-	-	23.5	19.5	34.1	37.8	42.2	35.8	35.3
<i>IUC</i>	0.8	-	-	4.3	8.0	5.0	5.5	2.4	1.9	1.3
<i>NC</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.8

**Due to the Canary politic specificities, results are attached not to the single political parties, but to the groups or coalitions led by the referred main parties. Therefore, it has been also possible to show the CC party members result addition, even before the CC foundation in 1993. ** (CC) Coalición Canaria, (PSOE) Partido Socialista Obrero Español, (PP) Partido Popular, (IUC) Izquierda Unida por Canarias, (NC) Nueva Canarias.*

Source: ISTAC (Canary Islands Statistics Institute)

**Table 5.4. Electoral Results (in average %).
European Parliament Elections in the Canary Islands (1987-2009).**

	1987	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009
CC	15.5	10.2	19.0	34.3	17.0	16.1
<i>PSOE</i>	32.9	35.3	25.0	24.9	38.7	36.5
<i>PP</i>	17.1	17.0	44.3	33.9	40.2	41.3
<i>IUC</i>	4.4	5.4	8.4	2.9	1.9	1.6

**Due to the Canary politic specificities, results are attached not to the single political parties, but to the groups or coalitions led by the referred main parties. Therefore, it has been also possible to show the CC party members result addition, even before the CC foundation in 1993. ** (CC) Coalición Canaria, (PSOE) Partido Socialista Obrero Español, (PP) Partido Popular, (IUC) Izquierda Unida por Canarias.*

Source: ISTAC (Canary Islands Statistics Institute)

At first glance, tables confirm that there is dual or even triple voting within the Archipelago, and that non-State wide parties (mainly CC) get better ballot records in Local and Regional elections than in National or European ones. However, we may use some assets in order to verify the above mentioned statement about the regional cleavage different importance depending on the different electoral processes levels.

Therefore, following OÑATE and OCAÑA (1999) we will use two indexes to explain some of the specificities of the particular Canary electoral sub-system from the regional cleavage perspective. First of all, the Regionalist Vote index

(RVi), that would add the non-State wide parties average vote in each electoral contest within the Canary Islands. Secondly, the Differentiated Regionalist Vote index (DRV_i), that would compare the Regionalist Vote index differences depending on the election level.

The mentioned Oñate and Ocaña research already demonstrated in 1999 a high level of regional vote average in the Canary Islands only behind the Catalan and the Basque RV_i, and sharing the third and the forth ranking position with Navarre, depending on the historical period. While Navarre traditionally reached the RV_i ranking third position among the Autonomous Communities until the end of the eighties, since CC born at the nineties beginnings, the Canaries reached that third place.

Despite of this exploratory paper will not compare Canary indexes with the rest of the Autonomous Communities ones, we will use them to better analyse and resume this section tables and to check if ten years ago Oñate and Ocaña's partial conclusions for the Canary Islands are still valid a decade later. Thus, we will restrict our analysis to the last ballot boxes records at the four election level: Local, Regional, National and European, through table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Last Electoral Results (in average %) at local (2007), regional (2007), national (2008) and European (2009) level in the Canary Islands. (Regional Vote index –R_{vi}– included).

	2007 (L)	2007 (R)	2008 (N)	2009 (E)
<i>CC</i>	25.3	24.5	17.6	16.1
<i>PSOE</i>	30.8	35.0	39.9	36.5
<i>PP</i>	20.7	24.4	35.3	41.3
<i>IUC</i>	1.2	0.7	1.3	1.6
<i>NC</i>	6.3	5.5	3.8	-
<i>CCN</i>	4.4	5.1	-	-
<i>RV_i</i>	36	35.1	21.4	16.1

* (CC) *Coalición Canaria*, (PSOE) *Partido Socialista Obrero Español*, (PP) *Partido Popular*, (IUC) *Izquierda Unida por Canarias*, (C) *ueva Canarias*, (CCN) *Centro Canario Nacionalista*.

Source: ISTAC (Canary Islands Statistics Institute)

Political parties' records in the Archipelago at different election levels confirm ancient trends about dual and even triple vote depending on the election

level. Indeed, RVi help us to visualize the aggregate average voting to the non-State wide parties is very similar within Local and Regional processes, around 35 or 36%. However, Canary electors do not vote that much regionalist parties within National and European contests. This fact is usual within Autonomous Communities with an important regional cleavage and significant non-State wide parties. But data are very clear in the Archipelago. The RVi is reduced to 21% in the National elections and even more in the European ones (around 16%). This means a completely different competition at Regional and Local level than at National or European ones. While the regional cleavage is much decisive for the Island voter at Local and Regional elections, non-State wide parties records are much reduced at National and even more at European elections, where voters behaviour is much determined by the ideological cleavage.

Analysing the last electoral records from the Differentiated Regionalist Vote index (DRVi) perspective, we can appreciate that high difference between the Local and Regional elections on the one side, and the rest of the elections on the other side. In fact the DRVi reaches 14 or 15 points when comparing National elections to Regional and Local ones, and 19 and 20 points when comparing Regional and Local with European elections. The current DRVi data are important taking into account that one decade ago (See OCAÑA and OÑATE 1999, or check local, regional and European 1999 elections and national -2000- ones results, within this section), they never reached more than 8 points, at maximum. Therefore, we have contrasted that during the last decade the Differentiated Regionalist Vote index has grown up to 2.5 times. Thus, the dual or triple vote attitude (regarding the non-State wide parties) is even deeper and extended in the Canary Islands

6. Attitudinal characterisation of the Canary electorate through the national/regional dimension

This section attempts to describe the main characteristics of the whole Canary Islands electorate, compared to the main regional cleavage representative Coalición Canaria electorate. Therefore, we would follow LLERA, MONTERO and PALLARÉS (1998) structures. This analysis will be then very useful to contrast to what extend the non-State wide parties presence is due to the centreperiphery (regional) cleavage, or to what extend some other conflicts or fractures are hidden.

Several analyses could be developed attending to different variables. But, we will only focus in four main different indexes to describe and analyse the whole Canary and CC electorates, attending to the above mentioned national/regional

dimension. Indeed, those referred indexes will be: the national-regional self identification subjective scale, the nation/region definition, the pride degree average about being Spanish, and the left-right ideology scale.

First of all, we will attend to the classic national/regional subjective self-identification index. This index assumes the existence of a population proportion that rejects any State-level connotation dealing with its self-identification (LLERA, MONTERO and PALLARÉS, 1998). The last

“Moreno question” index opinion pool data (2005), will be used then. Traditionally, Canarians (due to their geographical location and distance within the Ultra-periphery of the EU) had in both “More Canarian than Spanish” and “Only Canarian” categories, only lower indexes than Galicians, Catalonians and Basques. Furthermore, the “More Canarian than Spanish” category has only increased in the last surveys since CC reached the regional government in 1993.

Table 6.1. “Moreno question”(national/regional self identification index -in average %-) applied to both, Canary Islands and Coalición Canaria electorates.

	Only Spanish	More Spanish than Canarian	As much Spanish as Canarian	More Canarian than Spanish	Only Canarian
<i>Canary Islands</i>	2.4	2.0	56.9	29.8	6.7
<i>CC voters</i>	-	2.2	51.1	40.0	6.7

Source: CIS (National Sociologic Research Centre), Barómetro Autonómico 2005 (2610)

However, it is possible to compare and contrast the last 2005 Moreno’s indexes in the whole Archipelago, but only among Coalición Canaria voters, as well. Through the Table 5.1, we could check not so different indexes among coalition voters and the whole Canary electorate. Those are only remarkably different in the “More Canarian than Spanish” category, 10% higher for the CC voters than for the whole Canary electorate. On the contrary, the whole electorate gets higher indexes in the “As much Spanish as Canarian” (almost 6%), and in the “Only Spanish” one (2.5%). While no significant differences among both electorates could be tested in the “More Spanish than Canarian” and the “Only Canarian” categories.

Some more details should be underlined to remark the light or moderate nationalism/regionalism exhibited by the CC electorate. Despite of none of its

voters declares itself only Spanish and not Canary (otherwise it would be contradictory to vote Coalición Canaria), both, the whole electorate and the CC one, shares the 6.7% who declares its only Canary feeling.

Therefore, following the nationalism/regionalism cleavage, we can state that the CC electorate Canary identification is not higher, but exactly the same, than the whole Canary electorate one. Thus, the CC voter is as much nationalist as the rest of the Canary electorate.

Furthermore, it would be even more correct to state that the CC voter is as less nationalist as the rest of the canary voters. Following same 2005 autonomic surveys, it could be stated that the CC electorate has the lowest (6.7%) “Only from my Autonomous Community” index among the current in the national parliament non-State wide parties electorates. Indeed, the rest of the Non-State wide parties electorate performances in that Moreno’s category are as follows: Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (61.5%), Nafarroa Bai (50.0%), Eusko Alkartasuna (45.3%), Partido Nacionalista Vasco (38.9%), Convergencia I Unió (16.2%), Bloque Nacionalista Galego (13.7%), (CIS, 2005).

Secondly, we will attend to the nation/region definition among both, the whole Archipelago and CC electorates, to best represent their territory: the Canary Islands. Indeed, this symbolic representation is a main axe within the national integration problems researches. The existence of majority “national representations” within the sub-State level implies deep national level integration lacks (LLERA, MONTERO and PALLARÉS, 1998). The last opinion pools data (2005), resumed in the table 6.2 will be then used.

Table 6.2. ational or Regional definition about the own Canary Autonomous Community (in average%) applied to both, Canary Islands and Coalición Canaria electorates.

	Region	Nation	None of them	Not known / answered
<i>Canary Islands</i>	83.6	6.7	4.7	4.9
<i>CC voters</i>	80	11.1	2.2	6.7

Source: CIS (National Sociologic Research Centre), Barómetro Autonómico 2005 (2610).

Following the referred data, it could be contrasted the high disproportion about the Canary Islands definition as Region or Nation among both, the Canary and the main representative of the regional cleavage within the Archipelago (Coalición Canaria) electorates. While the 83.6% of the whole Canary Islands electorate defines the Archipelago as a region, only the 6.7% uses the nation terminology. Moreover, indexes are only slightly different among CC voters. Four out of five of them define the Archipelago as a region, while the 11.1% prefers to use the nation concept. Indeed, indexes variations between both electorates are very small, only between 3.5 and 4.5%.

These indexes complement table 6.1 ones and contrast that the regional cleavage fracture, mainly represented in the Archipelago by Coalición Canaria, is not a nationalist but a strong demanding regionalist one (TUÑÓN, 2008b). This is the main difference with the non-State wide parties voters profile in the Basque Country, Catalonia or Galicia. They prefer the “nation” denomination for their Autonomous Community. The almost exclusive “regional” definition is shared between the CC electorate and the rest of the Autonomous Communities (the three above mentioned excluded) non-State wide parties ones (LLERA, MONTERO and PALLARÉS, 1998).

Thirdly, it is also possible to attend to the pride degree average about being Spanish indexes, to summarize both, the Canary Islands and Coalición Canaria electorates non nationalistic but Canary regionalist feeling.

Table 6.3. Pride degree (in average%) about being Spanish applied to both,, Canary Islands and Coalición Canaria electorates.

	Completely proud	Very proud	Little proud	Not proud at all
<i>Canary Islands</i>	48.8	39.1	8.1	1.8
<i>CC voters</i>	44.4	46.7	8.9	-

Source: CIS (National Sociologic Research Centre), Barómetro Autonómico 2005 (2610)

As could be checked in the Table 6.3, data also contrast the already referred trends. Both electorates added proportions declaring being little proud or not proud at all of being Spanish never reach the significant 10% threshold. Indeed, the very proud and the completely proud added categories reach the 91.1 % of the CC electorate, and the 87.9% of the Canary electorate. Both proportions are not only high and significant, but much homogenous too. In fact, the sole small difference is the 4/5% proportion one between the completely proud and the very proud categories, whose signification can not be understood that relevant.

Finally, it must be also discussed the left-right ideology cleavage among both the Archipelago and CC electorate. Therefore, we will use the left-right scale among 1 and 10, being the 1-2 scale portion the left part and the 9-10 scale portion the right one. To deal with this issue, we could also use some precedent analysis (SORIANO, 2003, pp.121-122). There, it was shown the location tendency around the five-six points axe. Indeed, the central positions between the five and the six points concentrated the 40.5% of the CC electorate. Following table 6.4, these tendencies have been emphasized according to two years later (2005) data.

Some more details must be highlighted. Most of the CC voters locate themselves in the central (5-6) portion. This (three out of five) average is much significant about the CC voters' political election, far away from the ideological variable. Indeed, they vote regionalist but not left or right. Let us remember anyway that voters tend to situate themselves in the centre to avoid the extreme prejudices. However, this proportion is not shared with the whole Canary electorate, which situates itself closer to the left side. In fact, the centre category only represents the half of the CC electorate one. And much of these Canary voters decided to move to the (3-4) moderate left category. Indeed, the 21.7% versus 6.7% moderate left category and the 32.4% versus 60% centre category become into the main differences between the Archipelago and CC electorates ideological self-identifications. Thus, data show that the CC electorate tends more to the

ideological right than the whole Archipelago electorate that tends more to the left compared with the mentioned Coalición Canaria one.

Table 6.4. Self-Ideology left-right scale (in average %) among Coalición Canaria voters.

	Left (1-2)	(3-4)	Centre (5-6)	(7-8)	Right (9-10)	Not known / answered
<i>Canary Islands</i>	4.9	21.7	32.4	9.5	2.0	29.4
<i>CC voters</i>	2.2	6.7	60.0	4.4	-	26.7

Source: CIS (ational Sociologic Research Centre), Barómetro Autonómico 2005 (2610).

Indeed, this is not a small remark, because the ideological cleavage works out (in a different proportion) depending on the election level. In fact, last section data showed that while the regional/national cleavage was the more decisive in the Local and Regional electoral processes. The ideological cleavage importance increased in the National and European electoral processes.

7. Conclusions

The Canaries are one of the regions with more specificities all over Spain and Europe, due to its geographical characteristics: insularity, fragmentation, and distance to the Spanish and European political centres. Despite these inconveniences have been properly taken into account at both, European (Ultra-peripheral recognition within the Treaty of the European Union) and Spanish ("hecho diferencial" specific recognition) levels; the regional/national or centre/periphery cleavage dominates Canary politics.

At political parties' competition level, Coalición Canaria has traditionally been the main representative of the regional cleavage issue in the Archipelago. In fact, its birth and immediate electoral success and regional government performance represents the main issue of the contemporary Canary nationalism. The special regional electoral regulation and the lack of regional political arch fragmentation favoured the CC regional government leading majorities' continuity during the last fifteen years. Indeed, CC has exhibited a great ability to become the regional political axe (most of the times due to colligation agreements with the

national conservatives) although it never reached the regional absolute majority, or at current it is not the major regional party.

Through this paper we first analysed the main characteristics of the development of the centre-periphery cleavage issue in Spain, but also its importance at party level, within the specific Spanish framework highly marked by the proliferation of several non-State wide parties. This fact can not only be attached to those Autonomous Communities whose nationalist variable weight is more decisive, but to the so-called regionalist ones, too.

Through the political and electoral competition in the Canary section we got the key hints to understand the electoral performances within the Archipelago at different levels: Local, Regional, National and European. These different level electoral processes comparison allow us to contrast dual and sometimes triple Canary vote, depending on the election level and following the regional/national cleavage. In fact, through the Regionalist Vote and the Differentiated Regionalists Vote indexes, the centre/periphery most decisive importance at local and regional level elections in the Canaries was contrasted. Moreover, at national and European electoral processes the ideological right/left fracture exhibited a much decisive importance in contrast to the regional cleavage.

Moreover, the attitudinal characterisation of the Canary electorate through the national/regional dimension was also analysed. The Moreno question and the national/regional definition or the “Spanish being pride” average indexes contrasted the limited importance of the regional cleavage dealing about the national/regional characterisation of both the Archipelago and Coalición Canaria (as the main regional cleavage representative). Indeed, both electorates indexes were very homogeneous, and their differences not very representative at all.

To sum up, the regional/national cleavage determines Canary electors’ choices, but its importance degree depends on the election level. Moreover, the regional variable influence has been progressively decreasing through the years within the Archipelago. However, its influence depends on the elections level because of the insularity and the double insularity (the one suffered by the non capital islands, which would be an interesting and even more specific research field for further analysis about Islands’ electoral trends) are much decisive variables at local and regional level. Indeed, those are used to exploit the distinctiveness between the different government level executives and to obtain political gains from both, the regional and the national governments. Thus, the research results have contrasted the notable but limited (mainly to the local and the

regional electoral processes) and progressively decreasing influence, the regional cleavage has in the Canary Islands.

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